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lives and characters are well known to every person acquainted with the literature of that memorable period, several others of lesser note are also sketched; and copious extracts are given from their letters and other contemporary records. In the preparation of her volume the writer has apparently aimed at little more than to bring together in a convenient form, from numerous but easily accessible sources, a series of lives of Englishwomen noted for their piety or their learning; she has made no original researches; and she has added nothing to the information which we already possessed as to the topics discussed by her. But her volume is written with modesty and good sense, and though she has restricted her view to a single phase of character, and has made little or no mention of some of the most admirable women of that period, her sketches may be read with pleasure and profit. It would have been very easy to make a much better book,—one more graceful in style, with a wider range of interest, and less didactic in tone; but in default of such a record of the domestic life of the seventeenth century not a few readers will gratefully accept that which is here proffered to them.

11. — *Personal History of Lord Bacon. From Unpublished Papers.*

By WILLIAM HEPWORTH DIXON, of the Inner Temple. Boston: Ticknor and Fields. 1861. 12mo. pp. xix. and 424.

MR. DIXON'S previous contributions to biographical literature have been marked by laborious research, and also by an evident wish to present the subjects of his memoirs in the most favorable light possible; and the same characteristics are equally conspicuous in his latest work. From the rich treasures of the State Paper Office, Lambeth Palace, and other depositories of original documents, he has drawn much important inedited material to illustrate the public and private life of Bacon, and to justify his estimate of Bacon's character; and for these precious memorials of a great man he will receive the gratitude of every reader. He has done not a little to remove from Bacon's memory the load of obloquy which has rested on it for nearly two centuries and a half; he has poured new light on the obscure parts of Bacon's career; he has rectified the mistakes of previous writers; and he has shown that in many particulars the common judgment of Bacon is erroneous. But from the want of a judicial habit of mind in Mr. Dixon, and from his persistent hero-worship, it was to be anticipated that he would be an advocate and a partisan, and that it would be needful to scrutinize his statements with more than ordinary care. Nor are

we disappointed in this respect. Notwithstanding the worth of the service which he has performed, and of the new materials which he has gathered in the volume before us, we cannot but regret that a more dispassionate writer is not our guide along the course of investigation through which Mr. Dixon leads the reader. He has too often drawn a hasty conclusion, or glossed over some doubtful action, or ignored some disreputable proceeding, or confounded essential distinctions, to permit us to regard him as altogether trustworthy.

In some other qualities of lesser importance, Mr. Dixon's volume is also open to criticism. It is fragmentary in form, and, instead of presenting an artistic portrait of the Great Chancellor, it is little more than an ill-compacted collection of materials, from which another hand must select the really characteristic portions. The style, too, is at once flippant and ungraceful, aiming at the praise of smartness at the expense of dignity and elegance. Of his predecessors in delineating the life and character of Bacon, Mr. Dixon writes very contemptuously. "The lie against nature in the name of Francis Bacon," he says, "broke into high literary force with Pope. Before his day the scandal had only oozed in the slime of Welden, Chamberlain, and D'Ewes." Again: "Nature never yet made such a man as Macaulay paints." And finally: "Of all the sins against Francis Bacon, that of Lord Campbell is the last and worst." It is after this manner that Mr. Dixon thinks it courteous to write of men who have honestly formed a different estimate of Bacon's personal character from that which he entertains. Nevertheless, he has done much to justify a better opinion of Bacon's conduct than has been almost uniformly received; and though he has not given us a full and minute biography, no one will be competent to take the measure of Bacon's character who is not familiar with Mr. Dixon's pages. Bacon's fame will long owe much to the labors of his latest admirer, even though those labors are not altogether praiseworthy.

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12. — *Poems, Sacred and Secular.* By the REV. WILLIAM CROSWELL, D.D. Edited, with a Memoir, by A. CLEVELAND COXE. Boston: Ticknor and Fields. 1861. 16mo. pp. 284.

THIS extremely neat and almost dainty little volume, in its whole form and fashion, suits the character of its contents. They are strictly "occasional pieces," and the most of them are such as might properly be called "Fugitive Poetry," were there not in all, or nearly all of them, some touches of a finer spirit, which must redeem them, for a while at least, from oblivion. They are all very brief, suggested by a